

World War II Module Notes:

- The Depression Leads to Unrest in Europe
 - Germany was weakened by the Treaty of Versailles, and then hit by the effects of the Great Depression. Nationalist sentiments fostered, and led to the election of Adolf Hitler in 1933. Soon turned Germany into fascist state.
 - Two years later, Italy (Led by Mussolini) invaded Ethiopia. League of Nations did nothing.
 - Spain (Led by Francisco Franco) ousted Republican government during Spanish civil war of 1936-1939.
 - Anti-Semitism and dislike of capitalism/communism grew in Germany. Grew into banning Jews from public libraries, denying public education after 14, and being forbidden to practice law or medicine. Also began to rearm German military.
 - In 1931, Secretary of State Stimson tried to work for an arms embargo law, where the president could prevent shipments of guns or ammunition to aggressor nations. Amended to apply to all, aggressor nations and their victims. Measure died.
 - Congress passed a series of neutrality acts. Neutrality Act of 1935 forbid sale of munitions to all belligerents whenever the President proclaimed a state of war. February 1937, Congress passed a neutrality act forbidding all loans to belligerents.
 - Hitler annexed Austria in March 1938. September 1938, Hitler demanded that Czechoslovakia cede Sudetenland to the Reich. Prime Minister and French Premier yielded to threats. Nazis seized rest of Czechoslovakia in March 1939. Threatened Poland in spring of 1939. Roosevelt wanted 1937 Act repealed, but didn't have the votes. August 1939, Soviet Union and Germany signed nonaggression pact. September 1st, Hitler invaded Poland, provoked Great Britain and France to declare war. November, democratic majority pushed law that allowed sale of arms and ammunitions, just not on American vessels.
 - Between April 9 and June 22, taught world of blitzkrieg. Denmark, Norway, Netherlands, Belgium, and France were overwhelmed. British Army was pinned.

- Roosevelt gained 3rd term in 1940.
- Roosevelt formed Lend-Lease Act. Allowed President to sell, lend, lease, or transfer 7 billion of war material to any country whose defense was vital to that of the US. American navy patrolled North Atlantic.
- April 1941, US forces occupied Greenland. Hitler invaded Soviet Union in June. Iceland occupied in July 1941. September, German U-boat destroyed US Greer.
- July 1941, Roosevelt froze trade to Japan.
- “A Date Which Will Live in Infamy”: Pearl Harbor
 - Japan invaded Manchuria (a part of China) in 1931 When the U.S. refused to sell Japan any more scrap metal, the Japanese responded by formally allying with the Axis Powers.
 - On the morning of December 7, 1941, the Japanese launched a surprise attack on U.S. naval forces at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii
 - The Japanese forces attacked in two waves. The first consisted of 183 aircraft (such as torpedo planes, dive bombers, and fighter plans); the second of 170. More than 2,000 American service members lost their lives. Still, though the damage was serious, it wasn't as crippling as the Japanese had intended. Though more than a half dozen battleships suffered damage (two---the Arizona and the Oklahoma---were beyond repair), the U.S. Navy's fleet still contained carriers and destroyers not touched by the attacks. The survival of the aircraft carriers (which occurred purely through luck because they happened to be out of the harbor on practice exercises when the attack occurred) is extremely significant. Aircraft carriers ultimately prove decisive for the war in the Pacific, and the fact that the U.S. had their aircraft carriers still intact meant they did not lose precious time re-building such massive war ships and air planes.
- The Battle Begins and Rages
 - America's first task in Europe was supplying itself and its allies with the men and materiel necessary to successfully halt the German and Italian advances. Met massive resistance in the form of the German submarine fleet.
 - However, Americans got a shot in the arm in April 1942 with the Doolittle Raids. During these air raids on the Japanese mainland, U.S. bombers dropped

incendiary bombs on Yokohama, Tokyo, and a handful of other cities. Though the attacks caused little damage, they buoyed the spirits of the American forces and citizens. A second boost came in May 1942 when the Japanese, who were planning to begin an invasion of Australia at Port Moresby (located in Papua New Guinea), were cut short of their goal and beaten by the Allies at the Battle of Coral Sea. Frustrated, Japan then planned to lure U.S. forces into a trap near the tiny Pacific island of Midway and to then take the island, but U.S. forces launched a surprise attack and won the battle, which was a decisive victory.

- o In 1943, the outlook began looking brighter for Allied forces. American forces successfully concluded the months-long Battle of Guadalcanal in the Pacific, again thwarting Japanese desires to invade Port Moresby and by extension Australia. The Soviets continued to keep the Germans occupied on the Eastern Front in Europe during the summer of 1943. Soviet forces had taken extraordinarily heavy losses during late 1942 and early 1943, and Josef Stalin (leader of the Soviet Union) pressed Britain and America to both help him on the Eastern Front and also to attack Nazi-occupied France. As a side note, the Soviet Union had about 20 million (yes - you read that correctly) casualties among civilians and the military during World War II. Fighting on the Eastern Front was EXTREMELY brutal and difficult. But both refused. Instead, FDR and Winston Churchill (Prime Minister of Britain) chose to attack "the soft underbelly" of Europe by taking control of North Africa and southern Europe. Why do you think Roosevelt and Churchill opted for this plan? As a side-note, Germany had HEAVILY fortified its territories (including the coast of France) in northern Europe, so the U.S. and Britain wanted to concentrate their efforts on less fortified (the "soft underbelly") sections held by Italy. Doing so meant moving west from Egypt to Tunisia and capturing Axis forces in the spring of 1943 (which distracted the Axis forces and gave the Soviets a brief reprieve on the Eastern Front) as well as attacking mainland Italy. By September 1943, Italy surrendered to the Allies.
- o In reality, though, this surrender didn't mean much. Hitler personally oversaw the rescue of the captured Mussolini, who returned to Germany and promptly declared himself leader of the Italian Social Republic (a small portion of Italy